

D. Occurrences of Trade Porcelain and Stoneware in the Ryūkyūs

GEORGE H. KERR

The final presentation of the Symposium—severely curtailed by time limitations—was made by Mr George H. Kerr, who called attention to the Academy's tri-national, tri-institutional cultural survey of the Ryūkyūs carried out under his direction in 1960. One of the most important aspects of the survey, he reported, was the evidence it provided of special subjects which may be of interest for later, more substantial, investigation.

One such subject would certainly be the castle sites so important to Ryukyuan history in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries. Indications that the Okinawans had been most active in the general picture of Asian trade are to be found in existing documents. Proof of the point is also abundantly established by the plentiful sherd material to be found on the surface of all the castle sites examined, including blue-and-white porcelain and splendid celadons in great abundance. No serious sub-surface investigations have yet been made, he pointed out.

Mr Kerr also mentioned briefly the ceramic evidence to be found on sites in the off-lying islands, including heirloom pots and the typical heavy jars common to the ceramic trade throughout Southeast Asia still in everyday use. He called attention as well to the considerable ceramic collections of the Shuri Museum.

In conclusion, Mr Kerr invited the participants to examine the sherd materials incorporated within the exhibition and alluded to in the Introduction to this report. He expressed the hope for a tightening-up of policy in regard to archæology in the area, particularly as regards the destructional activities of the amateur 'moonlight archæologist', and the quasi-professional 'hit-and-run' archæologist interested only in publicity.

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